Development Programme of Cashew & Cocoa for extending the area under cashew by raising new plantations with improved high yielding varieties. The Scheme was continued during the Ninth Plan. The cashew development programmes have been subsumed under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Macro Management in Agriculture Supplementation/Complementation of States' Efforts through Work Plans from October, 2000. Till 2000-01, about 1.4 lakh hectares have been brought under new cashew plantations in various States.

(b) Assistance was provided to the State Governments for replanting of senile cashew plantations with improved high yielding varieties. So far about 48,000 hectares of senile cashew plantations have been replanted with improved varieties.

Gauge conversion work of Lumding-Badarpur-Silchar Section

*366. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether gauge conversion work in Lumding-Badarpur-Silchar section of NF Railway is on progress;

(b) if so, on which date the work has initiated and the probable date by which the work is likely to be completed;

(c) whether the work is proceeding as per schedule; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps to be taken to expedite for completion of the work?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a)Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The work was included in the Budget 1996-97. No target date of completion has yet been fixed. The work is in progress and would be completed as per availability of resources.

Archaeological site beneath Gulf of Cambay

*367. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an ancient Harappa like archaeological site, dating back to about 4000 B.C., has been discovered beneath the Gulf of Cambay;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have conducted any survey as to how the archaeological site got submerged into the deep water; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b)The National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai while carrying out under water surveys of the Gujarat coast during October, 2000-March, 2001 located some archaeological sites in the Gulf of Cambay at 30 to 40 meters water depth. The surveys have picked up images that suggest geometric objects which are normally man made. The surveys suggest a stretch of formation typical of a riverine regime. The archaeological sites have not yet been dated.

(c) No, Sir. However, detailed surveys and studies would be taken up jointly by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai and the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), Goa.

Railway City Ticket/Parcel Agencies to Single Person/Family

*368. SHRI LAKKHIRAM AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases and the names of cities where Commercial Division of Northern Railway allotted more than two Railway city ticket/parcel agencies to one person/family, before 31st May, 2001; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Railway city booking agencies for parcel as well as ticket booking are allotted by inviting applications through press advertisements, and the contracts are awarded to the most suitable applicant. The details of relationship between two agents at different locations is neither asked for nor maintained.

(b) Does not arise.

Inadequate Platforms at Patna Junction

*369. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the space on the existing platforms at Patna Railway Junction is not adequate to cope with the heavy rush of passengers; and